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ART. IX. — THE PRESIDENT ON THE STUMP.

ONE of the things that always struck us as particularly admirable in the public utterances of President Lincoln was a certain tone of familiar dignity, which, while it is perhaps the most difficult attainment of mere style, is also no doubtful indication of personal character. There must be something essentially noble in an elective ruler who can descend to the level of confidential ease without losing respect, something very manly in one who can break through the etiquette of his conventional rank and trust himself to the reason and intelligence of those who have elected him. No higher compliment was ever paid to a nation than the simple confidence, the fireside plainness, with which Mr. Lincoln always addressed himself to the reason of the American people. This was, indeed, a true democrat, who grounded himself on the assumption that a democracy can think. "Come, let us reason together about this matter," was the tone of all his addresses to the people; and accordingly we have never had a chief magistrate who so won to himself the love and at the same time the judgment of his countrymen. To us, that simple confidence of his in the right-mindedness of his fellow-men is very touching, and its success is as strong an argument as we have ever seen in favor of the theory that men can govern themselves. He never appealed to any vulgar sentiment, he never alluded to the humbleness of his origin; it probably never occurred to him, indeed, that there was anything higher to start from than manhood; and he put himself on a level with those he addressed, not by going down to them, but only by taking it for granted that they had brains and would come up to a common ground of reason. In an article lately printed in "The Nation," Mr. Bayard Taylor mentions the striking fact, that in the foulest dens of the Five Points he found the portrait of Lincoln. The wretched population that makes its lair there threw all its votes and more against him, and yet paid this instinctive tribute to the sweet humanity of his nature. Their ignorance sold its vote and took its money, but all that was left of manhood in them recognized its saint and martyr.

Mr. Lincoln was not in the habit of saying, "This is *my* opinion, or *my* theory," but, "This is the conclusion to which, in my judgment, the time has come, and to which, accordingly, the sooner we come the better for us." His policy was the policy of public opinion based on adequate discussion and on a timely recognition of the influence of passing events in shaping the features of events to come. On the day of his death, this simple Western attorney, who according to one party was a vulgar joker, and whom the *doctrinaires* among his own supporters accused of wanting every element of statesmanship, was the most absolute ruler in Christendom, and this solely by the hold his good-humored sagacity had laid on the hearts and understandings of his countrymen. Nor was this all, for it appeared that he had drawn the great majority, not only of his fellow-citizens, but of mankind also, to his side. So strong and so persuasive is honest manliness without a single quality of romance or unreal sentiment to help it! A civilian during times of the most captivating military achievement, awkward, with no skill in the lower technicalities of manners, he left behind him a fame beyond that of any conqueror, the memory of a grace higher than that of outward person, and of a gentlemanliness deeper than mere breeding.

One secret of Mr. Lincoln's remarkable success in captivating the popular mind was undoubtedly an unconsciousness of self which enabled him, though under the necessity of constantly using the capital *I*, to do it without any suggestion of egoism. There is no single vowel which men's mouths can pronounce with such difference of effect. That which one shall hide away, as it were, behind the substance of his discourse, or, if he bring it to the front, shall use merely to give an agreeable accent of individuality to what he says, another shall make an offensive challenge to the self-satisfaction of all his hearers, and an unwarranted intrusion upon each man's sense of personal importance, irritating every pore of his vanity, like a dry north-east wind, to a goose-flesh of opposition and hostility. Mr. Lincoln had never studied Quintilian; but he had, in the earnest simplicity and unaffected Americanism of his own character, one art of oratory worth all the rest. He forgot himself so entirely in his object as to give his *I* the sympathetic and per-

suasive effect of *We* with the great body of his countrymen. Homely, dispassionate, showing all the rough-edged process of his thought as it went along, yet arriving at his conclusions with an honest kind of every-day logic, he was so eminently our representative man, that, when he spoke, it seemed as if the people were listening to their own thinking aloud. The dignity of his thought owed nothing to any ceremonial garb of words, but to the manly movement that came of settled purpose and an energy of reason that did not know what rhetoric meant. There was nothing of Cleon, still less of Strepsiades striving to underbid him in demagogism, to be found in the public utterances of Mr. Lincoln. He always addressed the intelligence of men, never their prejudice, their passion, or their ignorance.

Mr. Johnson is the first of our Presidents who has descended to the stump, and spoken to the people as if they were a mob. We do not care to waste words in criticising the taste of this proceeding, but deem it our duty to comment on some of its graver aspects. We shall leave entirely aside whatever was personal in the extraordinary diatribe of the 22d of February, merely remarking that we believe the majority of Americans have too much good sense to be flattered by an allusion to the humbleness of their chief magistrate's origin; the matter of interest for them being rather to ascertain what he has arrived at than where he started from, — we do not mean in station, but in character, intelligence, and fitness for the place he occupies. We have reason to suspect, indeed, that pride of origin, whether high or low, springs from the same principle in human nature, and that one is but the positive, the other the negative, pole of a single weakness. The people do not take it as a compliment to be told that they have chosen a plebeian to the highest office, for they are not fond of a plebeian tone of mind or manners. What they do like, we believe, is to be represented by their foremost man, their highest type of courage, sense, and patriotism, no matter what his origin. For, after all, no one in this country incurs any natal disadvantage except that of being born to an ease which robs him of the necessity of exerting, and so of increasing and maturing, his natural powers. It is of very little consequence to know what our President

was; of the very highest, to ascertain what he is, and to make the best of him. We may say, in passing, that the bearing of Congress, under the temptations of the last few weeks, has been most encouraging, though we must except from our commendation the recent speech of Mr. Stevens of Pennsylvania. There is a pride of patriotism that should make all personal pique seem trifling; and Mr. Stevens ought to have remembered that it was not so much the nakedness of an antagonist that he was uncovering as that of his country.

The dangers of popular oratory are always great, and unhappily ours is nearly all of this kind. Even a speaker in Congress addresses his real hearers through the post-office and the reporters. The merits of the question at issue concern him less than what *he* shall say about it so as not to ruin his own chance of re-election, and that of some fourth-cousin to a tidewaitership. Few men have any large amount of gathered wisdom, still fewer of extemporaneous, while there are unhappily many who have a large stock of accumulated phrases, and hold their parts of speech subject to immediate draft. In a country where the party newspapers and speakers have done their best to make us believe that consistency is of so much more importance than statesmanship, and where every public man is more or less in the habit of considering what he calls his "record" as the one thing to be saved in the general deluge, a hasty speech, if the speaker be in a position to make his words things, may, by this binding force which is superstitiously attributed to the word once uttered, prove to be of public detriment. It would be well for us if we could shake off this baleful system of requiring that a man who has once made a fool of himself shall always thereafter persevere in being one. Unhappily it is something more easy of accomplishment than the final perseverance of the saints. Let us learn to be more careful in distinguishing between betrayal of principle, and breaking loose from a stupid consistency that compels its victims to break their heads against the wall instead of going a few steps round to the door. To eat our own words would seem to bear some analogy to that diet of east-wind which is sometimes attributed to the wild ass, and might therefore be wholesome for the tame variety of that noble and neces-

sary animal, which, like the poor, we are sure to have always with us. If the words have been foolish, we can conceive of no food likely to be more nutritious, and could almost wish that we might have public establishments at the common charge, like those at which the Spartans ate black broth, where we might all sit down together to a meal of this cheaply beneficial kind. Among other amendments of the Constitution, since every Senator seems to carry half a dozen in his pocket now-a-days, a sort of legislative six-shooter, might we not have one to the effect that a public character might change his mind as circumstances changed theirs, say once in five years, without forfeiting the confidence of his fellow-citizens?

We trust that Mr. Johnson may not be so often reminded of his late harangue as to be provoked into maintaining it as part of his settled policy, and that every opportunity will be given him for forgetting it, as we are sure his better sense will make him wish to do. For the more we reflect upon it, the more it seems to us to contain, either directly or by implication, principles of very dangerous consequence to the well-being of the Republic. We are by no means disposed to forget Mr. Johnson's loyalty when it was hard to be loyal, nor the many evidences he has given of a sincere desire to accomplish what seemed to him best for the future of the whole country; but, at the same time, we cannot help thinking that some of his over-frank confidences of late have shown alarming misconceptions, both of the position he holds either in the public sentiment or by virtue of his office, and of the duty thereby devolved upon him. We do not mean to indulge ourselves in any nonsensical rhetoric about usurpations like those which cost an English king his head; for we consider the matter in too serious a light, and no crowded galleries invite us to thrill them with Bulwerian commonplace; but we have a conviction that the exceptional circumstances of the last five years, which gave a necessary predominance to the executive part of our government, have left behind them a false impression of the prerogative of a President in ordinary times. The balance-wheel of our system has insensibly come to think itself the motive-power, whereas that, to be

properly effective, should always be generated by the deliberate public opinion of the country. Already the Democratic party, anxious to profit by any chance at resuscitation,—for it is extremely inconvenient to be dead so long,—is more than hinting that the right of veto was given to the President that he might bother and baffle a refractory Congress into concession, not to his reasons, but his whim. There seemed to be a plan at one time of forming a President's party, with no principle but that of general opposition to the policy of that great majority which carried him into power. Such a scheme might have had some chance of success in the good old times when it seemed to the people as if there was nothing more important at stake than who should be in and who out; but it would be sure of failure now that the public mind is intelligently made up as to the vital meaning of whatever policy we adopt, and the necessity of establishing our institutions, once for all, on a basis as permanent as human prudence can make it.

Congress is sometimes complained of for wasting time in discussion, and for not having, after a four months' session, arrived at any definite plan of settlement. There has been, perhaps, a little eagerness on the part of honorable members to associate their names with the particular nostrum that is to build up our national system again. In a country where, unhappily, any man *may* be President, it is natural that a means of advertising so efficacious as this should not be neglected. But really, we do not see how Congress can be blamed for not being ready with a plan definite and precise upon every point of possible application, when it is not yet in possession of the facts according to whose varying complexion the plan must be good or bad. The question with us is much more whether another branch of the government,—to which, from its position and its opportunity for a wider view, the country naturally looks for initiative suggestion, and in which a few months ago even decisive action would have been pardoned,—whether this did not let the lucky moment go by without using it. That moment was immediately after Mr. Lincoln's murder, when the victorious nation was ready to apply, and the conquered faction would have submitted without a murmur to that bold and comprehensive

policy which is the only wise as it is the only safe one for great occasions. To let that moment slip was to descend irrecoverably from the vantage-ground where statesmanship is an exact science, to the experimental level of tentative politics. We cannot often venture to set our own house on fire with civil war, in order to heat our iron up to that point of easy forging at which it glowed, longing for the hammer of the master-smith, less than a year ago. That Occasion is swift, we learned long ago from the adage; but this volatility is meant only of moments where force of personal character is decisive, where the fame or fortune of a single man is at stake. The life of nations can afford to take less strict account of time, and in their affairs there may always be a hope that the slow old tortoise, Prudence, may overtake again the opportunity that seemed flown by so irrecoverably. Our people have shown so much of this hard-shelled virtue during the last five years, that we look with more of confidence than apprehension to the result of our present difficulties. Never was the common-sense of a nation more often and directly appealed to, never was it readier in coming to its conclusion and making it operative in public affairs, than during the war whose wounds we are now endeavoring to stanch. It is the duty of patriotic men to keep this great popular faculty always in view, to satisfy its natural demand for clearness and practicality in the measures proposed, and not to distract it and render it nugatory by the insubstantial metaphysics of abstract policy. From the splitting of heads to the splitting of hairs would seem to be a long journey, and yet some are already well on their way to the end of it, who should be the leaders of public opinion and not the skirmishing har-assers of its march. It would be well if some of our public men would consider that Providence has saved their modesty the trial of an experiment in cosmogony, and that their task is the difficult, no doubt, but much simpler and less ambitious one, of bringing back the confused material which lies ready to their hand, always with a divinely implanted instinct of order in it, to as near an agreement with the providential intention as their best wisdom can discern. The aggregate opinion of a nation moves slowly. Like those old migrations of entire tribes, it is encumbered with much household stuff; a

thousand unforeseen things may divert or impede it; a hostile check or the temptation of present convenience may lead it to settle far short of its original aim; the want of some guiding intellect and central will may disperse it; but experience shows one constant element of its progress, which those who aspire to be its leaders should keep in mind, namely, that the place of a wise general should be oftener in the rear or the centre than the extreme front. The secret of permanent leadership is to know how to be moderate. The rashness of conception that makes opportunity, the gallantry that heads the advance, may win admiration, may possibly achieve a desultory and indecisive exploit; but it is the slow steadiness of temper, bent always on the main design and the general movement, that gains by degrees a confidence as unshakable as its own, the only basis for permanent power over the minds of men. It was the surest proof of Mr. Lincoln's sagacity and the deliberate reach of his understanding, that he never thought time wasted while he waited for the wagon that brought his supplies. The very immovability of his purpose, fixed always on what was attainable, laid him open to the shallow criticism of having none, — for a shooting star draws more eyes, and seems for the moment to have a more definite aim, than a planet, — but it gained him at last such a following as made him irresistible. It lays a much lighter tax on the intellect, and proves its resources less, to suggest a number of plans, than to devise and carry through a single one.

Mr. Johnson has an undoubted constitutional right to choose any, or to reject all, of the schemes of settlement proposed by Congress, though the wisdom of his action in any case is a perfectly proper subject of discussion among those who put him where he is, who are therefore responsible for his power of good or evil, and to whom the consequences of his decision must come home at last. He has an undoubted personal right to propose any scheme of settlement himself, and to advocate it with whatever energy of reason or argument he possesses, but is liable, in our judgment, to very grave reprehension if he appeal to the body of the people against those who are more immediately its representatives than himself in any case of doubtful expediency, before discussion is exhausted, and

where the difference may well seem one of personal pique rather than of considerate judgment. This is to degrade us from a republic, in whose foreordered periodicity of submission to popular judgment democracy has guarded itself against its own passions, to a mass meeting, where momentary interest, panic, or persuasive sophistry — all of them gregarious influences, and all of them contagious — may decide by a shout what years of afterthought may find it hard, or even impossible, to undo. There have been some things in the deportment of the President of late that have suggested to thoughtful men rather the pettish foible of wilfulness than the strength of well-trained and conscientious will. It is by the objects for whose sake the force of volition is called into play that we decide whether it is childish or manly, whether we are to call it obstinacy or firmness. Our own judgment can draw no favorable augury from meetings gathered “to sustain the President,” as it is called, especially if we consider the previous character of those who are prominent in them, nor from the ill-considered gossip about a “President’s party”; and they would excite our apprehension of evil to come, did we not believe that the experience of the last five years had settled into convictions in the mind of the people. The practical result to which all benevolent men finally come is that it is idle to try to sustain any man who has not force of character enough to sustain himself without their help, and the only party which has any chance now before the people is that of resolute good sense. What is now demanded of Congress is unanimity in the best course that is feasible. They should recollect that Wisdom is more likely to be wounded in the division of those who should be her friends, than either of the parties to the quarrel. Our difficulties are by no means so great as timid or interested people would represent them to be. We are to decide, it is true, for posterity; but the question presented to us is precisely that which every man has to decide in making his will, — neither greater nor less than that, nor demanding a wisdom above what that demands. The power is in our own hands, so long as it is prudent for us to keep it there; and we are justified, not in doing simply what we will with our own, but what is best to be done. The great danger in the present posture of affairs seems

to be lest the influence which, in Mr. Lincoln's case, was inherent in the occasion and the man, should have held over in the popular mind as if it were entailed upon the office. To our minds more is to be apprehended in such a conjuncture from the weakness than from the strength of the President's character.

There is another topic which we feel obliged to comment on, regretting deeply, as we do, that the President has given us occasion for it, and believing, as we would fain do, that his own better judgment will lead him to abstain from it in the future. He has most unfortunately permitted himself to assume a sectional ground. Geography is learned to little purpose in Tennessee, if it does not teach that the Northeast as well as the Southwest is an integral and necessary part of the United States. By the very necessity of his high office, a President becomes an American, whose concern is with the outward boundaries of his country, and not its internal subdivisions. One great object of the war, we had supposed, was to abolish all fallacies of sectional distinction in a patriotism that could embrace something wider than a township, a county, or even a State. But Mr. Johnson has chosen to revive the paltry party-cries from before that deluge which we hoped had washed everything clean, and to talk of treason at both ends of the Union, as if there were no difference between men who attempted the life of their country, and those who differ from him in their judgment of what is best for her future safety and greatness. We have heard enough of New England radicalism, as if that part of the country where there is the most education and the greatest accumulation of property in the hands of the most holders were the most likely to be carried away by what are called agrarian theories. All that New England and the West demand is that America should be American; that every relic of a barbarism more archaic than any institution of the Old World should be absolutely and irrecoverably destroyed; that there should be no longer two peoples here, but one, homogeneous and powerful by a sympathy in idea. Does Mr. Johnson desire anything more? Does he, alas! desire anything less? If so, it may be the worse for his future fame, but it will not and cannot hinder the irresistible march of that national instinct which forced us into war, brought

us out of it victorious, and will not now be cheated of its fruits. If we may trust those who have studied the matter, it is moderate to say that more than half the entire population of the Free States is of New England descent, much more than half the native population. It is by the votes of these men that Mr. Johnson holds his office; it was as the exponent of their convictions of duty and policy that he was chosen to it. Not a vote did he or could he get in a single one of the States in rebellion. If they were the American people when they elected him to execute their will, are they less the American people now? It seems to us the idlest of all possible abstractions now to discuss the question whether the rebellious States were ever out of the Union or not, as if that settled the right of secession. The victory of superior strength settled it, and nothing else. For four years they were practically as much out of the Union as Japan; had they been strong enough, they would have continued out of it; and what matters it where they were theoretically? Why, until Queen Victoria, every English sovereign assumed the style of King of France. The King of Sardinia was, and the King of Italy, we suppose, is still titular King of Jerusalem. Did either monarch ever exercise sovereignty or levy taxes in those imaginary dominions? What the war accomplished for us was the reduction of an insurgent population; and what it settled was, not the right of secession, for that must always depend on will and strength, but that every inhabitant of every State was a subject as well as a citizen of the United States,—in short, that the theory of freedom was limited by the equally necessary theory of authority. We hoped to hear less in future of the possible interpretations by which the Constitution may be made to mean this or that, and more of what will help the present need and conduce to the future strength and greatness of the whole country. It was by precisely such constitutional quibbles, educating men to believe that they had a right to claim whatever they could sophistically demonstrate to their own satisfaction,—and self-interest is the most cunning of sophists,—that we were interpreted, in spite of ourselves, into civil war. It was by just such a misunderstanding of one part of the country by another as that to which Mr. Johnson

has lent the weight of his name and the authority of his place, that rendered a hearty national sympathy, and may render a lasting reorganization, impossible.

If history were still written as it was till within two centuries, and the author put into the mouth of his speakers such words as his conception of the character and the situation made probable and fitting, we could conceive an historian writing a hundred years hence to imagine some such speech as this for Mr. Johnson in an interview with a Southern delegation.

“Gentlemen, I am glad to meet you once more as friends, I wish I might say as fellow-citizens. How soon we may again stand in that relation to each other depends wholly upon yourselves. You have been pleased to say that my birth and life-long associations gave you confidence that I would be friendly to the South. In so saying, you do no more than justice to my heart and my intentions; but you must allow me to tell you frankly, that, if you use the word South in any other than a purely geographical sense, the sooner you convince yourselves of its impropriety as addressed to an American President, the better. The South as a political entity was Slavery, and went out of existence with it. And let me also, as naturally connected with this topic, entreat you to disabuse your minds of the fatally mistaken theory that you have been conquered by the North. It is the American people who are victors in this conflict, and who intend to inflict no worse penalty on you than that of admitting you to an entire equality with themselves. They are resolved, by God’s grace, to Americanize you, and America means education, equality before the law, and every upward avenue of life made as free to one man as another. You urge upon me, with great force and variety of argument, the manifold evils of the present unsettled state of things, the propriety and advantage of your being represented in both houses of Congress, the injustice of taxation without representation. I admit the importance of every one of these considerations, but I think you are laboring under some misapprehension of the actual state of affairs. I know not if any of you have been in America since the spring of 1861, or whether (as I rather suspect) you have all been busy in Europe endeavoring to — but I beg pardon, I did not intend to say anything that should recall old animosi-

ties. But intelligence is slow to arrive in any part of the world, and intelligence from America painfully so in reaching Europe. You do not seem to be aware that *something has happened here during the last four years*, something that has made a very painful and lasting impression on the memory of the American people, whose voice on this occasion I have the honor to be. They feel constrained to demand that you shall enter into bonds to keep the peace. They do not, I regret to say, agree with you in looking upon what has happened here of late as only a more emphatic way of settling a Presidential election, the result of which leaves both parties entirely free to try again. They seem to take the matter much more seriously. Nor do they, so far as I can see, agree with you in your estimate of the importance of conserving your several State sovereignties, as you continue to call them, insisting much rather on the conservation of America and of American ideas. They say that the only thing which can individualize or perpetuate a commonwealth is to have a history; and they ask which of the States lately in Rebellion, except Virginia and South Carolina, had anything of the kind? In spite of my natural sympathies, gentlemen, my reason compels me to agree with them. Your strength, such as it was, was due less to the fertility of your brains than to that of your soil and to the invention of the Yankee Whitney which you used and never paid for. You tell me it is hard to put you on a level with your negroes. As a believer in the superiority of the white race, I cannot admit the necessity of enforcing that superiority by law. A Roman emperor once said that gold never retained the unpleasant odor of its source, and I must say to you that loyalty is sweet to me, whether it throb under a black skin or a white. The American people has learned of late to set a greater value on the color of ideas than on shades of complexion. As to the injustice of taxation without representation, that is an idea derived from our English ancestors, and is liable, like all rules, to the exceptions of necessity. I see no reason why a State may not as well be disfranchised as a borough for an illegal abuse of its privileges; nor do I quite feel the parity of the reason which should enable you to do that with a loyal black which we may not do with a disloyal white. Remember that this government is bound by

every obligation, ethical and political, to protect these people because they are weak, and to reward them (if the common privilege of manhood may be called a reward) because they are faithful. We are not fanatics ; but a nation that has neither faith in itself nor faith toward others must soon crumble to pieces by moral dry-rot. If we may conquer you, gentlemen, (and you forced the necessity upon us,) we may surely impose terms upon you ; for it is an old principle of law that *cui liceat majus, ei licet etiam minus*.

“In your part of the country, gentlemen, that which we should naturally appeal to as the friend of order and stability, — property, — is blindly against us ; prejudice is also against us ; and we have nothing left to which we can appeal but human nature and the common privilege of manhood. You seem to have entertained some hope that I would gather about myself a ‘President’s party,’ which should be more friendly to you and those animosities which you mistake for interests. But you grossly deceive yourselves ; I have no sympathy but with my whole country, and there is nothing out of which such a party as you dream of could be constructed, except the broken remnant of those who deserted you when for the first time you needed their help and not their subserviency, and those feathery characters who are drawn hither and thither by the chances of office. I need not say to you that I am and can be nothing in this matter but the voice of the nation’s deliberate resolve. The recent past is too painful, the immediate future too momentous, to tolerate any personal considerations. You throw yourselves upon our magnanimity, and I must be frank with you. My predecessor, Mr. Buchanan, taught us the impolicy of weakness and concession. The people are magnanimous, but they understand by magnanimity a courageous steadiness in principle. They do not think it possible that a large heart should consist with a narrow brain ; and they would consider it pusillanimous in them to consent to the weakness of their country by admitting you to a share in its government before you have given evidence of sincere loyalty to its principles, or, at least, of wholesome fear of its power. They believe, and I heartily agree with them, that a strong nation begets strong citizens, and a weak one weak, — that the

powers of the private man are invigorated and enlarged by his confidence in the power of the body politic; and they see no possible means of attaining or securing this needed strength but in that homogeneousness of laws and institutions which breeds unanimity of ideas and sentiments, no way of arriving at that homogeneousness but the straightforward path of perfect confidence in freedom. All nations have a right to security, ours to greatness; and must have the one as an essential preliminary to the other. If your prejudices stand in the way, and you are too weak to rid yourselves of them, it will be for the American people to consider whether the plain duty of conquering them for you will be, after all, so difficult a conquest as some they have already achieved. By yourselves or us they must be conquered. Gentlemen, in bidding you farewell, I ask you to consider whether you have not forgotten that, in order to men's living peacefully together in communities, the idea of government must precede that of liberty, and that the one is as much the child of necessity as the other is a slow concession to civilization and the habit of obedience to something more refined than force."

ART. X.—CRITICAL NOTICES.

- 1.—1. *Chastelard. A Tragedy.* By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. New York: Hurd and Houghton. pp. 178.
2. *Atalanta in Calydon. A Tragedy.* By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. 1866. pp. 113.

ARE we really, then, to believe the newspapers for once, and to doff our critical nightcaps, in which we have comfortably overslept many similar rumors and false alarms, to welcome the advent of a new poet? New poets, to our thinking, are not very common, and the soft columns of the press often make dangerous concessions, for which the marble ones of Horace's day were too stony-hearted. Indeed, we have some well-grounded doubts whether England is precisely the country from which we have a right to expect that most precious of gifts just now. There